

РАДЕЛ 3. ПРОБЛЕМЫ АНАЛИЗА И ИНТЕРПРЕТАЦИИ ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОГО ТЕКСТА

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THE SCIENCE OF SENSATION: DOSTOEVSKY, WILKIE COLLINS AND THE DETECTIVE NOVEL

The Woman in White (1859) made Wilkie Collins' reputation in Russia as in Western Europe. As A. V. Druzhinin wrote in a later review, «Белая Женщина» (Woman in White) была одним из наиболее читаемых романов за 1861 год.; indeed, he adds, «Белую Женщину» покупали и проглатывали с большей жадностью, чем диккенсовы «Ожидания» или «Фремлейский Приход» [Дружинин, 408]. In the wake of that success, Russian translations of Collins' novels appeared one after the other. While the main purveyor of Collins in Russian was E. N. Akhmatova in her journal *Collected Foreign Novels, Novellas and Stories in Russian Translation* (*Собрание иностранных романов, повестей и рассказов в переводе на русский язык*, 1856-1885), Collins also had a long run in the 1860s and '70s in the more mainstream *Russian Herald* (*Русский вестник*), starting with *No Name* in 1861 (*Без роду и племени*), *Armada* (*Армедель*) in 1864, and *The Moonstone* (*Лунный камень*) in 1868. Particularly given the fact that during those same years Dostoevsky published his own novels often side-by-side with Collins' in *Русский вестник*, it is hardly likely that Dostoevsky missed the phenomenon that was Collins in Russia. Had he read him instead, he would have found much to attract him.

The intense engagement with his readership that Collins displays on any number of levels, from his dramatic plot twists to his use of multiple narrators, finds a clear echo in the lures Dostoevsky would cast for his own readers; the «woman question» is also an issue for both writers. Perhaps most striking, however, is the ambiguous relationship to the emerging genre of the detective novel that both writers share, an ambiguity that derives in large part from an equally complicated response to what we might call positivist science. Both Dostoevsky and Collins tend to associate flawed aspirations to «extraordinariness» with an interest in science, in Ivan Karamazov's education as a natural scientist in *Братья Карамазовы*, for example, or in Count Fosco's study of chemistry in *The Woman in White*. At the same time, however, both writers remain open to the possibilities of a science of a certain kind. In their novels, «bad» science is positivistic and power-hungry on more than one level, aspiring to and associated with villainy of various kinds.

«Good» science, on the other hand, is one that by-passes positivism to reconcile subject and object in a science of a less determined, apparently more modern and even Post-modern sort.

Collins is more overt on both counts. It is not always chemistry, but Collins' villains are quite often scientists, including Mrs. Lecount in *No Name*, widow of the famous Swiss naturalist and current care-taker of his reptiles, and especially Dr. Benjulia, the repulsive vivisectionist in *Heart and Science* (1883); in *The Moonstone*, the «Wicked Colonel» who first brings the diamond to England is again an amateur chemist. If *The Moonstone* reiterates Collins' association of science with a particularly cold-blooded kind of criminality, however, it is also in this novel that Collins casts an emerging science of physiology in the most positive light. *The Moonstone* offers not just a famously convoluted plot, but also a famously convoluted narration, as the mystery of Rachel Verinder's stolen diamond is told in thirteen parts by eleven different narrators, each of whom relates only as much of the plot as she witnessed first-hand. Only by the end of the novel does it become clear that the theft was perpetrated by Rachel's two suitors acting as an impromptu tag-team. One of these two suitors, Godfrey Ablewhite, turns out to have been interested only in Rachel's fortune from the start, and his subsequent attempts to raise money on her diamond reflect his larger plans for her. The other, Franklin Blake, not only truly loves Rachel, but also removes the diamond from her room only under the influence of a dose of opium that he doesn't know that he has taken.

This highly involved mystery is solved in a «bold experiment» planned and executed by the marginalized figure of Ezra Jennings. Laboring under the burden of his own unfairly but irredeemably sullied reputation, Jennings' scientific work ««addressed to the members of my profession – a book on the intricate and delicate subject of the brain and the nervous system» will never see the light of day» [Collins, 382]. Jennings' origins and appearance, not to mention his addiction to opium, also associate him with the Indian diamond and with an Indian mysticism apparently at odds with good English science; indeed, when Jennings first proposes awakening Blake's latent memory, the lawyer Mr. Bruff sees nothing but «a piece of trickery, akin to the trickery of mesmerism, clairvoyance, and the like» [Ibid., 410]. Jennings himself, however, insists that what he offers is real 19th century British science: «'Science sanctions my proposal, fanciful as it may seem'» [Ibid., 398], he tells Blake, before handing him extracts from the works of two well-known, real figures in British medicine, Dr. William Benjamin Carpenter and Dr. John Elliotson. In his preface to the novel Collins makes Jennings' claim his own as he emphasizes the empirical underpinnings of what he calls «the physiological experiment which occupies a prominent place in the closing scenes of *The Moonstone*» [Ibid., xxiii]. That physiological facts nonetheless cannot quite

contain this experiment is evident above all in its aim, which is to show that while Blake objectively stole the diamond, subjectively he didn't; his responsibility for the theft of the diamond is in fact exactly like Ivan Karamazov's responsibility for the death of his father, only in reverse – where Blake committed the crime and yet didn't, Ivan didn't commit the crime and yet did. Still, physiology matters to Collins, not just on the level of content, but also on the level of form, above all in terms of the genre that he is widely held to have invented: the sensation novel.

It is the contemporary critical response to *The Woman in White* that introduces the term. Definitions of the genre tend to focus on «sensational» plot turns that often rely, as one scholar puts it, «on the themes of inheritance, bigamy, poisoning, drug abuse, and adultery, and ... frequent employment of the *deus ex machina* and other startlingly improbable coincidences...» [Fantina, 23]. Still, the term originally referred to the physiological response that the genre apparently aimed to elicit. As Vanessa L. Ryan explains, «mid-nineteenth-century advances in physiological psychology led both scientists and nonscientists to consider whether ... there is a type of thought, a kind of 'thinking without thinking,' that can serve as an epistemological alternative to reasoned and logical thought» [Ryan, 277]; a prime example of this argument can be found in George Henry Lewes' *The Physiology of Common Life* (1859-60), the second volume of which is largely devoted to «sensation», or feeling vs. thinking, nervous system vs. mind. Critics of the day understood the novel of sensation not just to emerge from this conversation but to capitalize on its insights to «... conjure up a corporeal rather than a cerebral response in the reader» [Daly, 40].

In her influential 1862 review of *The Woman in White*, for example, Mrs. Oliphant marvels at the effect produced in the very first chapter of the novel when the as-yet unidentified Woman in White reaches out to touch Walter's shoulder: «Few readers will be able to resist the mysterious thrill of this sudden touch. The sensation is distinct and indisputable. The silent woman lays her hand upon our shoulder as well as upon that of Mr Walter Hartright.... » Mrs. Oliphant notes that the effect is then repeated when Walter makes the connection between his chance companion and his beloved Laura, as she concludes: «These two startling points of this story do not take their power from character, or from passion, or any intellectual or emotional influence. The effect is pure sensation, neither more nor less...» [Collins, 119]. The vast majority of reviewers were highly uncomfortable with the idea that what the sensation novel produced was a kind of «thrill», what *The Christian Remembrancer* in 1864 described as a «drop from the empire of reason and self-control» [Ibid., 212]. Whether viewed in positive or negative terms, however, what the genre was seen to offer, as D. A. Miller puts it, was «one of the first instances of modern literature to address itself primarily to the sympathetic nervous system, where it grounds its characteristic adrenalin

effects: accelerated heart rate and respiration, increased blood pressure, the pallor resulting from vasoconstriction, and so on» [Ibid., 146].

Collins' evil scientists from Count Fosco to Dr. Benjulia, then, are balanced not just on the level of content by Ezra Jennings' complicated and yet nonetheless scientific reconciliation of objective and subjective, but more fundamentally in Collins' own formal recourse to the insights offered by physiology, and we see a similar tension at work in Dostoevsky. Dostoevsky certainly knew his Lewes, as at least according to Marmeladov, a copy of *The Physiology of Common Life* forms the most evident part of Lebeziatnikov's reading program for Sonia. As the association of Lewes' work with a particularly hapless example of a Nihilist would suggest, in the great divide that marked European psychology in the 1860s, Dostoevsky's sympathies lay more with the alienists and mesmerists than with the neurologists; we should note, too, that while Russian knows the phrase «sensation novel» (сенсационный роман), it is as a term applied only to the British literary tradition. Like Collins, though, Dostoevsky was nonetheless deeply interested in the effects of reading on particular readers, and at least according to contemporary reviews, his own writing drew a similarly fevered response.

The kind of visceral reaction Collins elicited was often compared to an illness that attacked the system the same way. In 1854, for example, Geraldine Jewsbury compared Collins' «strength» in his earliest works to «the strength of fever» [Ibid., 55], while by 1866 the *Westminster Review* described «the Sensational Mania in Literature» as a «virus is spreading in all directions» [Ibid., 158]. While the contemporary critical response to Dostoevsky is not as organized, still there is a tendency for Dostoevsky's readers in the same way to describe his writing as «morbid» or «sickly» («болезненно»)¹. The sickness is often associated with Dostoevsky himself, not just in terms of his well-known epilepsy but also as based on a reading of his works. It is also often Dostoevsky's characters who are seen as sick and, indeed, Dostoevsky makes that point himself. At issue finally is also the effect of Dostoevsky's writing on his readers, perhaps most strikingly in P. I. Tkachev's 1873 review, «Sick People» (Больные люди. «Бесы», роман Федора Достоевского, в трех частях).

For Tkachev, too, the «sick people» of his title are first Dostoevsky and then his characters, all of whom he sees as suffering from a sort of schizophrenia. Tkachev's concern is also, however, for the reader, who apparently suffers in Russia as in Great Britain from the new literature of sensation. Dostoevsky's writ-

¹ I would note that this tendency evidently continues to the present day as evidenced by a 2001 survey of readers in Cheliabinsk, see Zagidullina; among the «associations» readers make with Dostoevsky Zagidullina notes not just physical items (axes) and topos (St. Petersburg), but also «sensations» («ощущения») and «states» («состояния») such as «pain,» «sickness,» «nerves» and «hysteria».

ing, Tkachev argues, reflects an impoverished literary environment so desperate for «Нервного раздражения; скандалов, ужасов, пикантностей» that it makes recourse to «полицейским агентам, судебным следователям и даже просто стенографисткам окружных судов». As Tkachev summarizes what he sees as Dostoevsky's method, too: «Давайте больше и больше сплетен, скандалов, раздражайте сильнее спинной мозг читателя, заставляйте его волосы подыматься дыбом, потешайте его, смешите его или пугайте, но только не заставляйте его думать и оглядываться». Once again we have a literature very explicitly addressed «primarily to the sympathetic nervous system» and N. K. Mikhailovskii makes the same point in more general terms in his influential article «A Cruel Talent» («Жестокий талант» 1882).

Written just after Dostoevsky's death in 1881, «A Cruel Talent» is a first attempt to summarize Dostoevsky's oeuvre as a whole. While Mikhailovskii grants Dostoevsky's formal ability, he also sees a deliberate and sustained attempt to inflict suffering on the reader through the use of «непომєрными и совершенно нехудожественными длиннотами, вводными сценами, отступлениями» [Mikhailovskii, 332]. This «cruel talent» he continues: «... отуманит вам голову своими образами и картинами, заставит усиленно биться сердце, и разве в те lucida intervalae¹, когда во время самого чтения найдет на вас трезвость, вы спросите себя: и за что он этого Сидорова или Петрова так мучит? За что и меня вместе с ним так мучительно щекочет?» [Михайловский, 332-333].

In fact, Mikhailovskii explains, there is no purpose to this suffering other than to create «ощущений, ставших потребностью» [Ibid., 333], as in his estimation Dostoevsky's writing served Russian society of his day as nothing more than a kind of «наркотического свойства» [Ibid., 334]. The vocabulary is again striking, and if Dostoevsky himself may have been less inclined to avail himself of «physiological» explanations than either Tkachev or Mikhailovskii (both «progressive» or «democratic» critics), still their reading suggests a willingness to consider the possibilities of «sensation» apparently at odds with Dmitrii Karamazov's famous reference to the «trembling» of «little tails.»

In Dmitrii's confused rendering of the nervous system, the term is apparently not his, but Rakitin's. In Part IV Rakitin, like Smerdyakov already familiar to us as an echo of Ivan, takes his views on science to Dmitrii in prison. When Alyosha visits he is surprised at Dmitrii's sudden question, «Какой там был Карл Бернар?» «Нет, не Карл, постой», – he then adds, – «соврал: Клод Бернар. Это что такое? Химия что ли?» [Достоевский, т.10, 101]. Apparently Rakitin has been telling Dmitrii about the famous real French physiologist whose *Introduction à l'étude de la Médecine expérimentale* (1865) defined the basic principles of

1 лат.: светлые промежутки

experimental medicine and the scientific method. As Michael Katz summarizes, Bernard «believed in the absolute determinism of natural science; in his words: ‘the conditions of a phenomenon once known and fulfilled, the phenomenon must occur’» [Katz, 22], and Rakitin seems to have explained as much to Dmitrii. According to Dmitrii, Rakitin plans to write an article on the topic «дескать, нельзя было ему не убитъ, заеден средой» [Достоевский, т. 10, 101]. Dmitrii then attempts to explain to Alyosha Rakitin’s thesis:

Вообрази себе: это там в нервах, в голове, то есть там в мозгу эти нервы... (ну чорт их возьми!) есть такие этакие хвостики, у нервов этих хвостики, ну, и как только они там задрожат... то есть видишь, я посмотрю на что-нибудь глазами, вот так, и они задрожат, хвостики-то... а как задрожат, то и является образ, и не сейчас является, а там какое-то мгновение, секунда такая пройдет, и является такой будто бы момент, то есть не момент, – чорт его дери момент, – а образ, то есть предмет, али происшествие, ну там чорт дери – вот почему я и созерцаю, а потом мыслю... потому что хвостики, а вовсе не потому, что у меня душа и что я там какой-то образ и подобие, все это глупости ... (Ibid., 101-102).

While Dmitrii is apparently convinced by Rakitin’s science, his account nonetheless finishes with the anguished cry, «Что, бога-то жалко! Химия, брат, химия! Нечего делать, ваше преподобие, подвиньтесь немножко, химия идет!» (Ibid., 102).

If we might tend to equate Dmitrii’s response with Dostoevsky’s own, Tkachev and Mikhailovskii’s reading of the formal devices at Dostoevsky’s command should give us pause; that Dostoevsky himself might stoop to the tools of sensation in his own writing, after all, would argue on his part instead a certain back-door openness to the «trembling of little tails» or at least a willingness to consider little tails together with less materialist approaches to psychology. In his own reading Katz qualifies our understanding of Dostoevsky’s approach to science by arguing that Dostoevsky’s quarrel was «not with science per se, but with ‘scientism’ – that is, the eagerness to extend the implications of the new scientific theories (and their method) to encompass all fields of investigation» [Katz, 73]. I would only expand Katz’ claim a little further to argue that Dostoevsky, exactly like Collins, finally objects also to a kind of flattening of science as science, a positivist reduction or over-simplification that ultimately does a disservice to the material world itself. Just as Collins’ ideal scientist re-inserts a measure of subjectivity in order to objectively recover what happened on the night Rachel Verinder’s diamond was stolen, so Dostoevsky’s ideal scientist would operate with a degree of sophistication and even flexibility unfortunately not possible for Rakitin nor even, at least for now, for Ivan Karamazov. Dostoevsky makes this point most clearly not in terms not of physiology, however, but in terms of mathematics.

In his lead-up to the «poem» of the Grand Inquisitor, Ivan famously rejects what in 1880 was still the quite new idea of non-Euclidean geometry¹. Ivan begins by assuring Alyosha that he accepts God «прямо и просто». «Но вот однако что, – he adds, – надо отметить: <...> если бог есть и если он действительно создал землю, то, как нам совершенно известно, создал он ее по эвклидовой геометрии, а ум человеческий с понятием лишь о трех измерениях пространства. Между тем находились и находятся даже и теперь геометры и философы и даже из замечательнейших, которые сомневаются в том, чтобы вся вселенная, или еще обширнее, – все бытие было создано лишь по эвклидовой геометрии, осмеливаются даже мечтать, что две параллельные линии, которые по Эвклиду ни за что не могут сойтись на земле, может быть, и сошлись бы где-нибудь в бесконечности. Я, голубчик, решил так, что если я даже этого не могу понять, то где ж мне про бога понять. Я смиренно сознаюсь, что у меня нет никаких способностей разрешать такие вопросы, у меня ум эвклидовский, земной, а потому где нам решать о том, что не от мира сего [Достоевский, т. 9, 294-295].

Accordingly, Ivan explains, he simply believes in God, while at the same time utterly refusing to accept His world. Even should there be some kind of revelation at the end of time that would justify everything that has happened with men, still he will not accept it: «Пусть даже параллельные линии сойдутся и я это сам увижу, – he says, – увижу и скажу, что сошлись, а все-таки не приму» [Ibid., 296]. Evidently Ivan's «Euclidean mind» limits both his science and his religion as if the two, in certain non-Euclidean forms, might be compatible, and Ivan runs into the same problem when his devil makes reference to indeterminate equations.

What Ivan wants always is certainty, and it is because he thinks that science will offer him that that he is, as Diane Oenning Thompson notes, Dostoevsky's «first hero-scientist» [Thompson, 205]. Unfortunately, a science that resolves all questions is only a certain kind of science, one that would exclude indeterminate equations as it excludes non-Euclidean geometry. «... Ведь я и сам, как и ты же, страдаю от фантастического, – the devil tells Ivan, – а потому и люблю ваш земной реализм. Тут у вас все очерчено, тут формула, тут геометрия, а у нас все какие-то неопределенные уравнения!» [Достоевский, т. 10, 165]. Indeterminate equations are equations with more than one variable and an infinite set of solutions, for example $2x=y$; exactly like non-Euclidean geometry, they open up multiple, indeed, infinite possibilities.

1 There is some debate as to how Dostoevsky learned of non-Euclidean geometry at all, see Kiiko and Thompson. I would also add that Dostoevsky may have encountered non-Euclidean geometry in the article on «Imaginary Geometry and the Truth of Axioms» that makes up the appendix to the second volume of George Henry Lewes' *Problems of Life and Mind*; the entire Lewes work appeared in Russian translation in 1875-76.

Ivan, like all Dostoevsky's Nihilist figures, subscribes to a much more limited and, indeed, deterministic notion of science. Certainly the idea that science offers objective certainties is widespread, and we might note, for example, a similarly «positivist» bent underlying Bakhtin's explanation of why science as opposed to, say, Dostoevsky's novels, is inherently monologic. For Bakhtin, the relationship of the scientist to his or her subject is fundamentally one-way: так как «весь методологический аппарат математических и естественных наук направлен на овладение вещным, безгласным объектом, не раскрывающим себя в слове, ничего не сообщающим о себе, — he explains, — познание здесь не связано с получением и истолкованием слов или знаков самого познаваемого объекта». Non-Euclidean geometry as it developed in fits and starts from the eighteenth century on, however, started exactly from the recognition that «the four postulates of absolute geometry simply do not pin down the meanings of the terms 'point' and 'line'» and «that there is room for *different extensions* of the notions»¹ [Hofstadter, 222]. We should also consider the implications of our own post-Einsteinian science, which, while not endowing the material world with actual «words or signs» of its own, nonetheless reflects an understanding of relativity or point of view on various levels.

As Peter Gaffney writes: «Not only does ... [Einstein] ... mean the end of Newtonian universality (the claim that physical laws are applicable throughout time and space), challenging claims and assumptions based on the unity of science, but also it means the end of a mechanistic worldview in which matter passively fills out a set of determinate spatio-temporal relations» [Gaffney, 17]. A committed Deleuzian, Gaffney goes even a step further to argue that «a particular (historically specific) body of scientific thought has a *reciprocal* relationship with the object it determines, each one participating in the actualization of the other and simultaneously traversing a diversity of social, intellectual, and material processes ...». In other words, even in a scientific context subject and object may mutually inflect one another in what Douglas Hofstadter calls a «strange loop,» and if this kind of scientific irresolution is more than Ivan Karamazov can handle, that is, of course, exactly Ivan's problem. Dostoevsky, however, is here on home ground, as is Collins, and as both writers imagine a notably similar and entirely scientific reconciliation of subject and object, the two together finally also represent a significant and indeed recurring tendency in the history of the detective novel.

The history of the detective novel is often told from the point of view of Sherlock Holmes and the late 19th century rise of a forensic science that will offer an empirical solution to all mysteries once and for all. Collins and Dostoevsky, however, evidently operate in terms of a different but equally traditional kind of

1 Hofstadter gives the example of elliptical geometry. If we envision geometrical space as a sphere, a «point» would consist of a «pair of diametrically opposed points of the sphere's surface»; a line is then a «great circle on the sphere» [Hofstadter, 93].

detective novel, one that Umberto Eco describes in his commentary to his own contribution to the genre. In Eco's estimation his *Name of the Rose* (1980) offers more the one kind of labyrinth. The labyrinth that is the monastery library is what Eco calls a «mannerist maze»: in a «model of the trial-and-error process,» «[t]here is only one exit, but you can get it wrong.» This solution is one that Ivan Karamazov could embrace. The actual world as Eco's hero-detective comes to know it, however, is a labyrinth of another sort, one possessed of what Deleuze and Guattari call a «rhizome structure»: «The rhizome is so constructed that every path can be connected with every other one. It has no center, no periphery, no exit, because it is potentially infinite»; as opposed to the monastery library, this greater world «can be structured but is never structured definitively» [Eco, 57-58]. This ultimately indeterminate world is Collins' and Dostoevsky's as it is Eco's. We may prefer it otherwise, and some readers evidently do. Still, the juxtaposition of Collins and Dostoevsky reminds us that the detective novel is and always has been, in Eco's words, «of all model plots ... the most metaphysical and philosophical» [Ibid., 53].

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ДИНАМИКА ЖЕНСКИХ ОБРАЗОВ В ДРАМАТУРГИИ Т. УИЛЬЯМСА 1940-50-Х ГОДОВ XX ВЕКА

Т. Уильямс был одним из любимых авторов В. М. Павермана – ученого, имя которого вынесено в заглавие данного сборника. Именно этому драматургу он посвятил отдельный параграф в своей диссертации и, соответственно, в монографии. Его пьесы «Стеклянный зверинец», «Трамвай «Желание»» и особенно «Ночь игуаны» подробно и, если можно так выразиться, «со вкусом» разбирал на занятиях по истории американской драматургии, любимом своем спецкурсе, который вел на отделении романо-германской филологии.

Валерий Маркович видел в Уильямсе прежде всего художника-реалиста, продолжавшего традиции чеховского театра «настроения», его интересовали психологические аспекты, связанные с мотивацией поступков персонажей и с авторской оценкой этих поступков. При этом в большей степени он говорил именно о героях американского драматурга: о Вэле Зевьере из «Орфей спускается в ад», о Ларри Шенноне из «Ночи игуаны».

В данной статье нами будут рассмотрены образы героинь самых известных произведений Уильямса, написанных в десятилетие с середины 40-х до середины 50-х годов XX века. Это пьесы «Стеклянный зверинец» (*The Glass Menagerie*, 1944), «Трамвай «Желание»» (*A Streetcar Named Desire*, 1947) и «Кошка на раскаленной крыше» (*Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, 1955).

В своем построении определенной модели женского характера в ранних пьесах американского драматурга и последующем разборе динамики его развития мы исходили из ставшего аксиомой тезиса, определяющего «характерные для Уильямса темы – красоты, слишком хрупкой, уязвимой и потому обреченной, «возвышающего обмана», рокового одиночества, непонимания людей» [Зарубежная литература XX века, 494]. И действительно, мотивы